

Winter Months on the Farm

How to Improve Them

Work for Farm Mechanics

Improving the Dull Days With Handy Jobs of Construction or Repairing

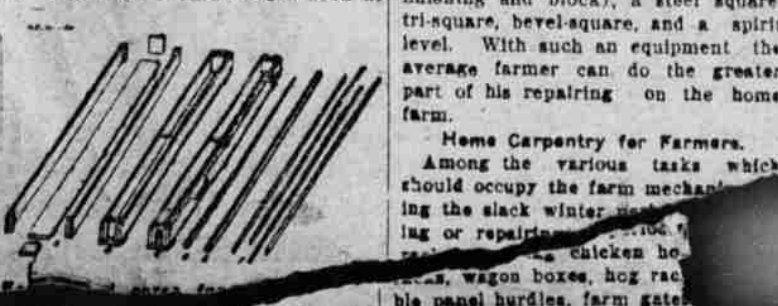
By PROF. C. A. OCOCK
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The mixture used in feeding troughs is a 1-3-4 combination; that is, 1 part cement, 3 parts sand and 4 parts clean broken stone or gravel. The stone or gravel should not be larger than one-half inch in diameter. The sand should be free from sticks, straw or dirt, and the cement a good grade of Portland. Place the cement in the center of the pile of sand at one corner of the mixing box and mix dry until the mixture has the same color throughout. In the opposite corner place the stone and wet thoroughly; after this mix stone, sand, and cement, adding water until the whole mass has a medium consistency. Use a mason's brick trowel to work out all air bubbles, leaving a smooth surface. When desired a finishing coat of 1 part cement and 3 parts sand may be used.

The reinforcement can be either 3-16 inch steel or iron rods or double twisted barbed wire. Place the reinforcement the same distance from the surface as the 1-3-4 diameter. The reinforcements should run lengthwise of the trough, with a strand at each end and one in the middle running crosswise.

Making Concrete Fence Posts.
In making solid concrete posts, a mixture of one part cement, 1-1/2 parts sand, and 1 part clean broken stone or gravel is used. The preparation of the concrete is the same as for the troughs. The post forms should be made of a fair grade of rather green lumber, should have the inner surface smooth, and all joints tight, to prevent the cement from leaking away with the water. The forms permit of the post being made 7 feet long and 4 1/2 inches square at the ends. The bottom board has holes to correspond to the dowel pin in the side boards, the iron clamps used preventing the side boards from spreading.

The same reinforcement as for feed troughs can be used. When filling the form with concrete, place 1/2 to 3/4 inch in the bottom of the form, then lay in two rods one on each side, continue the filling until within 3/4 inch of the top, when the remaining two rods should be properly laid in. Each rod should have a hook at



each end about 1 inch long to prevent the steel from slipping in the concrete when a strain is put upon the post.

Wire Posts for Fencing.
The wire posts for fencing the wire fence to the post use the longest galvanized iron staples that can be purchased, and while the cement is still soft set them the same as you would drive them into a wooden post.

Wireless Concrete Post.
For hollow concrete posts the operation is the same except that there is a hole left in one of the end gates of the form to receive the galvanized iron core. This core should taper from 1 1/2 inches in diameter at the bottom to 1 inch at the top. In using the core it should be covered with a coat of oil or grease and then it can be removed in from 5 to 6 hours after the post is moulded.

The wood core is made in four pieces. The two sides are flat inside and curved outside. The two central pieces are 1 inch thick and taper from 1 1/2 inches to 1 inch in width. This core is 2 1/2 inches in diameter for its entire length. When using the wooden core it is more desirable to make the post square from top to bottom. To successfully use this core wrap it with old newspaper or thin wrapping paper. This prevents the cement from coming in direct contact with the wood and permits of the removal of the core in 10 to 20 minutes after the post is finished.

Curing the Posts.
The side boards of the forms should be removed in 24 to 48 hours after pouring, but the posts should not be moved for at least one week and then very carefully. In the meantime they should be sprinkled with water several times daily and protected from sun and wind and from frost if it is freezing weather. Posts should cure at least 60 days before being set in the ground. During this period they should, if possible, be placed upon a bed of moist sand and thoroughly wetted each day. Prices of materials vary in different localities, but the average price including labor will range from \$2 to \$30 cents per post.

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